

NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

DATE: 25 May 196

Approved For Release 2002/06/24 : CIA-RDP33-02415A000800340037-5



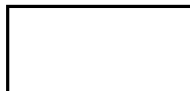
Office of the DD/S&T

TO: James A. Cunningham

SUBJECT: "History of the U-2 Program"

REMARKS:

The Board of Editors of the Studies in Intelligence met last weekend and everyone inquired about the status of your paper, "History of the U-2 Program." Could you give me a written status and prospectus on this paper.



Albert D. Wheelon

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**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Deputy Director for Science and Technology

**SUBJECT:** Proposed History of the U-2 Program

**REFERENCE:** DD/S&T-2426-65, dated 25 May 1965

1. I am frank to admit that since you first mentioned the proposed history of the U-2 program to me many months ago, I have made no forward strides in accomplishing the objective for a variety of reasons; most of them connected with the more immediate priorities of daily burning issues. I have, however, done considerable thinking about the approach to take in attacking such a history. Some of these thoughts are summarized below:

a. As I understand it, the original motivation for writing an authentic story of the U-2 was the idea that it could first be published as a controlled Agency document in Studies in Intelligence, and then at a point downstream, should it serve the interest of the Agency, it could be declassified and presumably made available to the people at large to counter-act many of the spurious, sensational stories and books which have been written on the program since 1 May 1960. If this is the case, and I think it is a sound one, I believe that a full treatment of the subject from its inception in November 1954 up through the Powers trial in Moscow in the early fall of 1960 should be attempted. I indicate "full treatment" to set the stage for an effort in greater depth than perhaps may have been anticipated when you suggested that I write "an article" for Studies in Intelligence on this subject.

b. I would propose that in order to do justice to the subject, the writer would of necessity have to separate himself from the daily crisis environment in which we operate, and work on the subject with the same care and attention necessary to produce a good doctoral thesis. There are many vital records, for example, on the early days in the U-2 program, in the form of memoranda, written observations, reports of conversation, etc., which repose

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downgrading and  
declassification

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in the [REDACTED] Records Center. These would have to be exhumed and reviewed by the author as part of the basic research. I would also suggest that we make arrangements to visit and interview personally certain of the key personalities connected with the early days of the program and record these interviews on tape. Among the people I would propose as subjects for such personal interviews are: Allen Dulles, Dick Bissell, Kelly Johnson, General Ritland, former Air Force General Don Putt, Dr. Herb Miller, General Andrew Goodpaster, General Cabell, [REDACTED] former assistant to Dick Bissell, and others of like stripe. In addition, I would add interviews with certain of the former U-2 field personnel, such as Colonel Stan Beerli, as well as some of the original U-2 pilots who remain with us. Within Headquarters, there are only a few of us who remain with any degree of knowledge, however imperfect, of the earliest days of the program. These would include [REDACTED] John Parangosky, and myself, who would contribute as appropriate.

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c. From the material gathered above I believe an extremely interesting and reasonably accurate reconstruction of the early days of the U-2 program can be woven together. It would have the added attraction of not simply being a bare-bones factual presentation, but would benefit from the spice and anecdotes which would be supplied by most of the personalities I have enumerated above. The editorial process of pulling this material together would not be a simple one.

2. I would assume that the entire process outlined above would take somewhere in the neighborhood of from four to five months of concentrated effort to produce the kind of volume of which we all can be not only confident, but proud. There would be some expense involved in secretarial support to such an effort, as well as a certain amount of travel to interview the principals, although most of them are fairly handy to Washington. I feel that I can best serve this project as a collaborator than as the sole source and originator of the document. We do have in

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OSA, in the person of [ ] an individual who by training and temperament could handle this assignment to the Queen's taste. He has also been with the program for almost as many years as I have, and he has the added advantage of having already authored the [ ] operation on the U-2. I would appreciate your comments and reaction to the above at your convenience.

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JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.  
Deputy Assistant Director  
(Special Activities)

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